

warm adherence to her brother-in-law, Ludovico il Moro, until he was ruined, she should have turned to court the victor.¹ It is not strange that the age became marked by complete depravity of public and private morals, that the great men are enigmas as to character and purpose, and that they are demonic in action. The sack of Rome put an end to the epoch by a catastrophe which was great enough to strike any soul with horror, however hardened it might be.² That event seems to show how the ways of the time would be when practiced by brutal soldiers.

725. The sex relation and position of women. In such a period the sex relation is sure to be degraded and the position of woman is sure to be compromised. They can only be defined by the restraints which are observed or enforced. When all restraints are set aside sensuality is set free. Women were not suppressed. They took their place by the men and only demanded for themselves a liberty equal to that assumed by the men. The opinion has been expressed that Isabella d'Este "may be regarded as the most splendid realization of the Renaissance ideal of woman." ³ Vittoria Colonna has been more generally accorded that position. She is doubly interesting for her Platonic relation to Michael Angelo, who was fifteen years her senior,⁴ and for her personal character. The title "bastard" was often worn with pride. In royal houses it happened often that the illegitimate branch took the throne on the failure of the other, so that the existence of the former was a recognized and useful fact, not a shameful one.⁵ Although it was true that woman

" occupied a place by the side of man, contended with him for intellectual prizes, and took part in every spirited movement,¹ although many of them became celebrated for humanistic attainments, and were intrusted with the government of states,⁶ yet it was not possible that they could maintain womanly honor and

¹ Cartwright, *Isabella d'Este*, I, 145.

² Geiger, *Renaissance*, 318.

⁸ Opdyke, trans, of Castiglione, *Courtier*, 398.

* Lannau-Rolland, *Michel Ange et Vittoria Colonna*, Chap, VI.

⁵ Heyck, *Die Mediceer*^ 70; Symonds, *Renaissance*, I, 37.

⁶ Gregorovious, *Lticretia Borgia*, 27.